

Appl. No. 10/700,776  
Atty. Docket No. 9419  
Amdt. dated January 19, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of October 19, 2005  
Customer No. 27752

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

#### Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A tampon comprising a longitudinal centerline and a cross-sectional area defined[[,] orthogonal to said centerline and a mass of absorbent material formed into a self-sustaining shape, said self-sustaining tampon comprising:

- a.) an insertion end region comprising an insertion end fiber density;
- b.) a withdrawal end region ~~opposite said insertion end region~~, wherein said withdrawal end region comprises a withdrawal end region fiber density; and
- c.) a center region intermediate said insertion end region and said withdrawal end region, wherein said center region comprises a center region fiber density;

wherein said self-sustaining shape has an outer surface which is substantially serpentine; and wherein said insertion end region fiber density is greater than said center region fiber density.

Claim 2. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end region is tapered and said withdrawal end region is flared.

Claim 3. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end region is flared and said withdrawal end region is tapered.

Claim 4. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end region is tapered and said withdrawal end region is tapered.

Claim 5. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end region is tapered and flared and said withdrawal end region is tapered and flared.

Claim 6. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said withdrawal end is asymmetric about said longitudinal centerline of said tampon.

Claim 7. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end fiber density and said withdrawal region fiber density are about equal.

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Claim 8. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 wherein said insertion end has a maximum perimeter region in said insertion end region and a maximum perimeter region average fiber density, and wherein said center region has a minimum perimeter region and a minimum perimeter region average fiber density; wherein said maximum perimeter region average fiber density is greater than said minimum perimeter region average fiber density.

Claim 9. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 8 wherein said maximum perimeter region average fiber density located in said insertion end region is from about 105% to about 150% of said minimum perimeter region average fiber density located in said center region.

Claim 10. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 8 wherein said maximum perimeter region average fiber density located in said insertion end region is from about 110% to about 130% of said minimum perimeter region average fiber density located in said center region.

Claim 11. (Original) The tampon according to Claim 8 wherein said maximum perimeter region comprises a cotton and rayon blend having a first average fiber density and said minimum perimeter region comprises a cotton and rayon blend having a second average fiber density which is less than said first average fiber density.

Claim 12. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim 1 ~~further comprising an applicator~~ wherein said tampon is housed in said an applicator.

Claim 13. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim 1 ~~further comprising an applicator~~ wherein said tampon is housed in an applicator, wherein said applicator is at least partially translucent, allowing at least a portion of said tampon to be visible to a user prior to use.

Claim 14. (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim 1 ~~further comprising an applicator~~ wherein said tampon is housed in said an applicator; wherein said applicator comprises an insertion end region comprising flexible material; and wherein at least a portion of said flexible material conforms to at least a portion of said substantially serpentine outer surface of said tampon, enabling a user to observe a profile of at least a portion of said substantially serpentine outer

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surface of said tampon through said flexible material prior to expulsion of said tampon from said applicator.

**Claim 15.** (Currently Amended) The tampon according to Claim 1 ~~further comprising a wrapper wherein said tampon is enclosed within wrapper is a tightly conforming wrapper.~~

**Claim 16.** (Original) The tampon according to Claim 1 further comprising texturing on said outer surface of said tampon.